

## 2004 OYDCs Attend NMPF Meeting in Washington, D.C.

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MMPA 2004 OYDCs

In June, we attended the National Milk Producers Federation meeting in Washington D.C. We took the opportunity to arrive before our meeting and visited the International Spy Museum. What a fun and interesting place. That afternoon we met up with the other YCs and coordinators for a visit to the National Cathedral. During our informational tour, we admired the architecture and beautiful stained glass windows.

Tuesday morning began with a PAC breakfast together with the NMPF Board of Directors. Saxby Chambliss, a Senator from Georgia and also the Chairman of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee started the morning with a warm welcome to Washington D.C. He discussed some of the challenging issues they are dealing with including the CAFTA debate and its impact on the sugar and dairy industry.

We were then given the pleasure to be part of the June NMPF Board meeting. Secretary of Agriculture Michael Johanns joined the meeting session and provided an update on several current issues. He discussed the original BSE case and how well it was handled. Secretary Johanns also referred to the next Farm Bill and hoped it would be dealt with in a timely matter. He addressed other topics including producer handlers, animal ID and the Canadian border status.

Jerry Kozak, NMPF President/CEO, discussed his concern over the current topic of agri-terrorism. The media had recently reported how agriculture could be a target (specifically milk). A discussion was held on the impor-

ance of being proactive to regulation when it comes to keeping the milk supply safe from terrorism.

After lunch we went to the YC Advisory Council planning meeting. There we discussed our ideas for the NMPF annual meeting to be held this November. One change is to have shorter break out sessions so we can cover more areas of interest. We are really excited about going to this year's NMPF annual meeting in San Francisco, CA.

Our group was treated to a night tour of the Washington D.C. memorials. We were able to walk around the Jefferson, Roosevelt, Lincoln, Vietnam and the World War II Memorials. Two memorials were added since the last time we took this tour – always something new to see in D.C.

Wednesday morning we were reintroduced to some NMPF staff members who gave us information on current legislative issues we were to discuss with our Senators, Representatives and their aides. Those issues included CAFTA, John's and Milk Protein Concentrate. They also gave us tips on how to have a successful hill visit that afternoon.

Our first visit was in Senator Debbie Stabenow's office with agricultural aide Kasey Gillett. She was fairly new to the office. She was very informed and interested in what we said. Next we headed



*Lynda (L) and Jeff (R) Horning met with Representative Joe Schwarz (center) to discuss important issues facing the dairy industry.*

to Representative Joe Schwarz's office. As we approached his office, Rep. Schwarz was just on his way out to go vote on a bill. We walked with him on his way and had the opportunity to discuss a couple key industry issues with him. We then went back to his office and followed up with his Legislative Assistant Meghan Kollasa. Our last visit was in Senator Carl Levin's office with Russell Moy, his agricultural aide. We had enough time to visit the American Indian museum before meeting up with the others at a local eatery for dinner.

Thursday morning we met one last time to recap what we all did the previous days. In review of the conference we really enjoyed the time spent socializing with the other young couples discussing our operations and our families and sharing ideas.

We encourage everyone to invite a YC to their local meetings this winter and get them involved with MMPA. We have learned a lot about our cooperative, milk marketing, and legislative issues by being in the YC program. We want to thank MMPA for this remarkable opportunity.

*Jeff and Lynda*